

DD 491
S68 K7
Copy 1

Mr. Henry
respectfully
the autho

W A R S

BETWEEN

THE DANES AND GERMANS.

FOR THE

POSSESSION OF SCHLESWIG.

BY PROF. ADOLPHUS L. KOEPPEN.

FROM THE "AMERICAN REVIEW" FOR NOVEMBER, 1848.

Free Library of Philadelphia

DII491
S68K7

WARS BETWEEN THE DANES AND GERMANS,

FOR THE POSSESSION OF SCHLESWIG.

PART FIRST.

On feint d'ignorer que le Slesvig est une ancienne partie intégrante de la Monarchie Danoise dont l'union indissoluble avec la couronne de Danemarc est consacrée par les garanties solennelles des grandes Puissances de l'Europe, et où la langue et la nationalité Danoises existent depuis les temps les plus reculés. On voudrait se cacher à soi-même et au monde entier, qu'une grande partie de la population du Slesvig reste attachée, avec une fidélité inébranlable, aux liens fondamentaux unissant le pays avec le Danemarc, et que cette population a constamment protesté de la manière la plus énergique contre une incorporation dans la confédération Germanique, incorporation qu'on prétend médier moyennant une armée de cinquante mille hommes!—*Semi-official article.*

THE political question with regard to the relations of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein to the kingdom of Denmark, which at the present time has excited so great a movement in the North, and called the Scandinavian nations to arms in self-defence against Germanic aggression, is not one of a recent date. This dispute has for centuries been the cause of destructive feuds, and during later years the subject of public discussions and violent debates, not only among the parties more immediately interested, but in the public and private assemblies in Germany, and in a flood of publications, all breathing hostility against Denmark, and showing both a want of knowledge as to the points in dispute, and a scornful disregard of the just rights of that injured country. This old quarrel has now, by the general agitation in Europe, suddenly taken its ancient form of a *casus belli*, by the open rebellion of Holstein, and the invasion of Denmark by the army of the Germanic Confederation. The illegality, injustice, and violence of these proceedings are obvious to every observer who, without prejudice, has followed the course of events. And yet have the ambitious authors of the sedition and the attack, attempted to envelope themselves in an outward show of right; the secret springs which moved the whole machinery were left in the back-ground, but still made their appearance now and then amidst the presumptuous confessions and boastful prognostications which, all at once, have intoxicated the forty millions of Germans with hopes of conquest on land and sea, and thus made that pensive and philosoph-

ic nation blind to the evidences of history, faith, and justice.

The Dano-Germanic contest is still going on: Denmark cannot yield; she has already lost so much that she cannot submit to any more losses for the future. The issue of this contest is of vital importance to her; she is already fighting for her existence. Nor will her Northern brethren let her sink, nor Russia, who has pledged her guaranty for the integrity of the Danish monarchy, permit its further dismemberment. On the final settlement of this war may perhaps depend the peace of Europe. And yet it has excited but very little attention and sympathy in this country. The duchy of Schleswig has generally been supposed to stand in the same relation to Denmark as that of Holstein, and its inhabitants to be true-born Germans, who were impatiently waiting for the moment when they might break loose from the small peaceful kingdom in the North, and join the "glorious destinies of the great united German *Fatherland*." It has been said and repeated that, since the late revolution in France, the voice of the people has become the voice of God,—that it has torn to shreds the worm-eaten scrolls of feudal rights and treaties, and freely permitted the different tribes, German, Slavonic, and Italian, to group, form, and constitute themselves without any regard to kings and cabinets. Let this principle be carried out where foreign governments have imposed oppressive laws upon conquered nations, whose history, development, and prosperity they have disregarded, and whose nationalities they have crushed. Such may,

more or less, have been the conduct of Russia in Poland, and of Austria in Italy. But with regard to Denmark, her relations to the duchies have been entirely different. Her paternal rule had ever truly respected the nationalities and rights of her subjects. Her present liberal-minded monarch, on his succession to the throne, had given a free constitution, and such had been his desire to allow equal privileges to every part of his dominions, that he had proposed to give to Schleswig and Holstein, though the smaller population, the same representation and advantages which he conceded to his Danish people. The concessions freely granted by the enlightened sovereign, from his own conviction, in the midst of profound peace, and without a sign of disorder, had been hailed with universal satisfaction ; and afterwards, when violent commotions began to shake all Europe, and the general vertigo reached Holstein, the majority of the people in Schleswig, who had ever been sincerely attached to their mother-country, instantly stood forward, and in the most energetic manner protested against the separation, and the dreaded union with Germany.

Looking from a distance upon the rapid course of events, and the steadfast opposition of all Scandinavia, united, with one heart and hand, against the attacks and pedantic boastings of the German Parliament, we may, through the dim vista of futurity, with confidence proclaim the victory of the righteous side ; and in the mean time historically and impartially prove that the cause of the Danes is as good as their swords—that the rebellion in Holstein was brought about, not by the desire of the mass of the people in the duchies, but by the ambition of a few ringleaders, directly supported by Friederich Wilhelm IV., the hare-brained King of Prussia, who by means of kindling the flame of war in the North, and of promising the Germans a flag and a fleet, flattered himself to avert from his own guilty head the revenge of his exasperated subjects for the horrible slaughters in his own capital.

We shall now carry our readers to the shores of the Baltic, and going back to the remote ages of feudalism and chivalry, trace the origin and progress of the protracted struggle between German and Scandinavian nationality, and then terminate this

essay with a picture of the present' war, faithfully drawn up from authentic sources, and direct communications both from Denmark and Germany.

The peninsula of Jutland, known by the ancient Romans as the *Chersonesus Cimbrica*, is bounded on the east by the Kattegat, the little Belt, and the Baltic ; and on the west by the North Sea. It is divided from Germany by the river Eyder, and extending northward for two hundred and seventy miles, terminates at the low headland of Skagen. Its breadth from east to west is from thirty to ninety miles. The middle part of this low peninsula, nearly in its full length, consists of dreary heaths and moors, intermixed here and there with some patches of arable lands and good pastures for cattle and flocks of sheep and goats. The northwestern coasts are low, sandy, and full of dangerous shoals. The violent west wind, sweeping across that inhospitable region, impedes the growth of forest trees, and renders the climate damp, cold, and disagreeable throughout the year. Farther south, in Schleswig, the western coast consists of meadow lands, (*marskland*,) which offer rich pastures, and are defended by dikes against the swell of the North Sea. Quite different is the character of the eastern part of the country. The shores of the Baltic and Kattegat are high and often covered with fine forests. They sometimes present romantic and picturesque scenery from the many deep indentations of the sea, called *fjorde*, or friths, which for miles run into the land, where they expand into extensive sheets of water, and are bordered by beautiful oak and beech woods ascending gradually to the tops of the hills. The largest frith is the Liim-Fjord, running across the whole breadth of Jutland from the Kattegat to the North Sea, and making the northern part of it an island.* Its banks are bleak and dreary ; the dark forests which in the tenth and eleventh centuries covered that hilly region, now only remain in Salling Land, a small, beau-

* The North Sea broke through the low, sandy coast near Lemvig, a few years ago, and united with the Liim-Fjord by a breach, through which now small vessels can pass.

tiful tract, well cultivated, and inhabited by a rich and laborious yeomanry. The lands on the eastern coast are very fertile for several miles in the interior, and produce an abundance of rye, wheat, barley, oats, beans, pease, rape-seed, and excellent pulse and fruits. In many parts the heaths are broken up and converted into arable lands, agriculture being highly encouraged by the Danish government. Still the raising of cattle and horses supplies the principal revenue of Jutland. The huge oxen are driven to the rich meadow-lands of Holstein, where they are fattened and afterwards sold in Hamburg and Berlin. In later years large exportations of oxen are made by sea to France and England. The horses of Jutland and Holstein are strong, large, well-formed, and eminently fitted for war.

Jutland is, by the small rivers Skodborg-aa and Konge-aa, divided into North Jutland, containing 9,500 square miles, and South Jutland, or Schleswig, 2,624 square miles. The latter province is more fertile and better cultivated. Here the *geest* or arable lands from the broken-up heaths amount to 700 square miles, the meadow-lands 320, the forests 112, the moors 224, and the barren heaths 450. North Jutland has twelve more or less considerable towns, and 550,000 inhabitants. Schleswig possesses six towns, among which are the beautiful and well-built Schleswig, standing in a pleasant and picturesque situation on the Schley, and the lively commercial town of Flensburg; the province containing 350,000 inhabitants. Schleswig is bounded on the south by the German duchy of Holstein, extending seventy miles from the Baltic to the North Sea, and forty-eight miles from the Eyder on the north, to the Elbe and the duchy of Lauenborg on the south. It contains 2,528 square miles, with 440,000 inhabitants. Holstein is thus of smaller extent than Schleswig, but more productive and better cultivated, and has a larger population. The Jutlander and the Schleswiger are both of Scandinavian origin, and the mass of the people have nearly the same general character, manners, and customs, except the greater liveliness and elasticity, which the Schleswiger has acquired by his intercourse and intermixture with the Germans. The Jutlanders are no longer the bold and daring rovers, who with the

other Northmen, on their prancing sea-horses, made the shores of Germany, France and England tremble at their approach. They are still a brave, but a peaceful and quiet people; they are laborious and persevering, but extremely slow and somewhat awkward in their manners. They are hospitable and cheerful with their countrymen, but cold and retired towards foreigners, with whom they have but little intercourse in their far-off and dreary country. They are more fond of ease than of show; and consequently the people in Jutland are more comfortable than the careless inhabitants of the sunny south. They are accustomed to substantial food, and make five meals a day; they are more economical than industrious, and do not know or regret the refinements of foreign countries. They are judicious observers and profound thinkers. They speak very slowly, with a harsh and inharmonious pronunciation, and are by their countrymen on the Danish islands considered cunning in calculating their own profit; the proverb is, "as sharp as a Jute." They are endowed with imagination, and possess tender and beautiful national songs in their own dialect. Though they are patient and enduring, they can be roused to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. They are strongly attached to their king and country, but care nothing about politics or newspapers, having been for centuries accustomed to the dull calm of an absolute government; and yet they possess an independent feeling of their own, and will not submit to harsh or arbitrary treatment from their superiors. The country people are generally middle-sized, short, fair-haired, of a gentle and agreeable physiognomy; their women are pretty, with blue eyes and rosy cheeks, but as clumsy as their helpmates, clattering along on wooden shoes.

This short sketch gives an idea of the people and country in times past; the eventful movements of late years have of course, in some degree, exerted their influence even as far as the distant shores of the Liim-Fjord.

In South Jutland, both the Danish and Low German (Plat-tydske) dialects are in use. In 1837, Danish was spoken unmixed in 116 parishes, with 113,256 inhabitants; in these districts Danish is the language used not only in common intercourse, but both in the churches and schools. In 36 parishes, with 45,460 in-

habitants, that language is generally spoken, but the German is employed in the churches and schools. Danish is likewise spoken and understood in Tondern, Flensburg, and the dioceses of Gottorp and Bredsted, with 36,000 souls; so that Danish is still the *mother tongue* for 194,700 Schleswigers among the 350,000 which inhabit the duchy, thus forming a decided majority.

Quite different is the deportment and character of the Holsteiner. He is tall and handsome, with auburn hair. He is economical and industrious, like the Hollander; active and dexterous, ambitious and quarrelsome. He is arbitrary and imperious; witty, lively, but proud and overbearing toward his inferiors. He is full of talent and capacity, but boastful, grandiloquent and selfish. The Holstein cultivators own their lands and are a laborious, brave and intelligent people. Their farms are exceedingly well kept, and comfort and wealth are seen everywhere. The Holstein mariner is clever, bold and enduring, and sings his national German songs with the liveliness and spirit of an Italian.

Such is the character of the soil and the inhabitants of these three interesting provinces of the Danish monarchy.

The whole peninsula was in the remotest times of the middle ages inhabited by Jutes, Angles and Saxons. After the maritime expeditions of the two latter tribes to Britain, towards the middle of the fifth century of our era, Jutes and Frisians began to settle in the abandoned districts of Angeln or South Jutland, north of the Eyder; while large swarms of Vendes, Obotrites, and other western tribes of the Slavonic nation, occupied the eastern coasts of Nordalbingia or Holstein, the seat of the Saxons on the Elbe. In the eighth century Denmark did not yet form a united kingdom; different sea-kings ruled on the islands of the Baltic. Godfred, the king of Reit-Gothland or Jutland, advanced on the Eyder, where he erected the celebrated wall or mound of earth and stones called the *Dannevirke* across the peninsula from the bay of the river Schley, (*Slias-wyk* or Schleswig,) westward to the North Eyder, to protect his Scandinavian dominions from the inroads of the conquering Franks of Charlemagne, at that

time, A. D. 810, occupied in the conversion and subjugation of the Saxons. The Frankish emperor being continually harassed by the fleets and armed bands of the Northmen on the coasts of Friesland, and at the mouth of the Elbe, founded the strong castle of Hamaburg (Hamburg) on its northern bank, and afterwards concluded a treaty with the successor of Godfred, Hemming, according to which the Eyder should form the boundary between Denmark and the Frankish empire, and the Danes abandon all their conquests south of that river.

Towards the close of the ninth century the Danish king, Gorm the Old, at last succeeded in uniting the small independent states of the islands, and the main land of Jutland and Scania, (*Skaane*), in Southern Sweden, into a powerful kingdom. He crossed the Eyder; but entering into Nordalbingia, then a province of the duchy of Saxony, his career of conquest was arrested. The German king, Henry I. the Fowler, with his German chivalry, defeated the wild Northmen and established the *march* or margraviate of Schleswig, between the Eyder and the Schley—the *limes Danicus*, as it is called by the chroniclers, which now for nearly a century remained the battle-ground of the hostile Danish and Saxon borderers during their continual devastating forays.* But Canute the Great, during his interview with the German emperor Conrad the Salian, in Rome, in the year 1027, obtained the cession of this district, and thus the limits of Denmark were restored such as they had been in the time of Charlemagne.† The Saxon march, once more

* This German settlement beyond the Eyder is very doubtful. Some chroniclers ascribe it to Charlemagne; others with more probability to the Saxon Henry the Fowler (919—936). Harald Klak, a petty king of South Jutland, had been converted to Christianity so early as A. D. 826. The intrepid missionary of the North, Anscharius, built the first church in Schleswig at that time, and sowed the first seed of Christian piety and love among the wild worshippers of Odin and Freya.

† The existence of this treaty between the Roman Emperor and the King of Denmark is confirmed by a very ancient inscription: *Eidora Romani terminus imperii*, which for centuries stood over the Old Holstein Gate of Rendsborg. This town was at that time the border fortress of Denmark, who possessed all the tolls and duties

incorporated with the rest of South Jutland, remained in immediate dependence upon the crown of Denmark. In this whole period we find that the South Jutes or Schleswigers had their language, laws, and customs in common with their northern brethren, the Islanders and the Skoningers or Danish inhabitants of Scania. The ancient division of the provinces into districts or shires, called *Herreder* and *Sysler*, and the genuine Scandinavian names of towns, villages and natural scenery, down to the very banks of the Eyder, give the most evident proof of the Danish nationality of the South Jutes.

Yet the wars with the Slavonic and Germanic tribes, rendered it necessary for the kings of Denmark to place a powerful commander in the border province, who, possessed of more independence and a strong army, might better secure the Danish frontiers towards Saxony. The noble-minded Knud Lavard, the son of King Erik the Good, was thus proclaimed the first duke (*dux* or *Hertug*) of South Jutland in 1102, and took up his residence in Hedeby (Schleswig) on the Schley, which had been erected into an episcopal see. Crossing the Eyder, Duke Knud, in many arduous expeditions, vanquished and converted the heathen Vagrarians, Obotrites, and Vendes; he extended his conquests as far as Pomerania, and forced the German Dukes of Saxony and Holstein to recognize his rights over Vendland.

Holzatia (*woody Saxony*) formed a part of the duchy of Saxony, belonging to the warlike house of Billungen, and consisted of Holstein Proper, Stormarn and the western district of the Ditzmarskers. In the year 1106, after the extinction of that family, the Emperor Lothaire erected Holstein into a county, with which he invested Count Adolph of Schauenborg, a castle on the Weser, as a fief dependent on the German Empire. The Holstein counts now assisted Knud Lavard in the reduction of the wild Slavonic tribes on the eastern coast; new settlers from Germany and

Holland were invited into the country, a bishopric was established in Lübeck, and the brave duke proclaimed king of the Obotrites. Yet this sudden accession of power kindled the jealousy of King Niels of Denmark, who considered the enterprising duke of the border province a dangerous competitor for the crown. He ordered Knud Lavard to his court at Roeskilde in Zealand, where that excellent and unsuspecting chief was waylaid in a wood by Magnus, the prince royal, and assassinated, in the year 1129.

During the following reigns of Valdemar I., the son of Knud Lavard, and Knud VI., the Danish power became formidable and threatening to all their neighbors. King Valdemar II., the Victorious, conquered the county of Holstein, which by a treaty, in 1214, with the German Emperor Friederich II., of Hohenstaufen, was incorporated with Denmark. He extended his feudal possessions in Pomerania, and even attacked the distant Esthonia, where the Danish crusaders, with the cross and the sword, introduced Christianity among the Slavonians, and swept the Baltic with their numerous fleets. During this period of seventy years (1157-1227) of victories and conquests, the external dominion of Denmark was raised to a higher splendor than it had ever attained since the reign of Canute the Great. The Danes were the ruling nation of the North; but their chivalrous conquests were soon to be lost by one of those sudden turns of fortune which are characteristic of those turbulent times of the middle ages. King Valdemar, while hunting with his son on the island of Lyöe, was taken prisoner by his vassal, Count Henry of Schwerin, and confined in a castle in Mecklenburg, until he by treaty ceded all the conquered territories between the Elbe and the Eyder, including the county of Holstein, Vagrien, and the whole duchy of Pomerania. The king, on his return to Denmark, immediately assembled a large army and crossed the Eyder. But a powerful confederacy had been formed against him, between the counts of Holstein and Schwerin, the free cities of Hamburg and Lübeck, and the primate of Bremen. In the bloody battle at Bornhöved, near Segeberg in Holstein, on the 22d of June, 1227, King Valdemar suffered a total defeat, and was forced to

on the river. In the fourteenth century, Rendsborg was ceded to the Counts of Schauenborg. The Latin inscription was taken down from the gate in 1506, on the dissolution of the German Empire, and is now deposited in the Royal Artillery Arsenal of the fortress.

give up all his pretensions to the countries south of the Eyder.

Valdemar II. died 1241, and the subsequent civil war, which broke out among the pretenders to the crown, brought Denmark to the very brink of destruction. This principal cause of such a rapid decline, was not only to be ascribed to the haughty bearing and dangerous influence of the rich and proud Catholic clergy and feudal nobility, mostly of German origin, who had received fiefs in the kingdom, but particularly to the pernicious practice at that time, of investing the royal princes, or other relatives of the kings, with the duchy of South Jutland, (*ducatus Tutiæ*), as a fief dependent on the Danish crown. Abel, the younger son of Valdemar, who had been invested with the duchy of Schleswig, laid claim to this province, as a free and independent patrimonial inheritance against his elder brother, King Erich Ploughpenning. Abel was defeated, and forced to receive the investiture of the duchy as a personal fief, not hereditary; but he took revenge against his brother, by the assassination of the latter on the Schley in 1250. The civil dissensions between the Kings of Denmark and their powerful vassals, the Dukes of South Jutland, who contended either for independent dominion or hereditary tenure, continued nearly without interruption; but though they often received aid from the German counts of Holstein, beyond the Eyder, they never succeeded in accomplishing their object.

The most distinguished of all the Holstein counts, Gerhard the Great, of Rendsborg, assumed, on the death of Duke Erich of South Jutland, the guardianship of his young son Valdemar, in opposition to the demands of his uncle, King Christopher II. of Denmark, who laid claim to that right. The king, at the head of a brilliant feudal army, entered the duchy and occupied the castle of Schleswig; but he shortly afterward suffered a signal defeat by the Holstein count on the Hestenberg; in consequence of which the Danes evacuated the duchy and retreated to North Jutland. The nobility of the kingdom, being disgusted with Christopher, expelled him from the country, and, yielding to the intrigues of Count Gerhard, called his ward, the young Valdemar Erikson, to the throne, and elected the

ambitious Holsteiner administrator of the kingdom, during the minority of the prince. In return for these good offices of his powerful uncle, Valdemar, who, at that time, (1326,) was only twelve years of age, bestowed the whole duchy of South Jutland upon Count Gerhard as a hereditary fief, and, according to the Holstein historians, signed an important act in Lübeck, by which he declared Schleswig and Holstein to be eternally united, and bound himself never to reclaim the duchy, or reunite it with the crown of Denmark.

Thus we have arrived at the first union of these two provinces, in the year 1326. But it is fully evident from whatsoever point we view the subject, that this act was without legality, and did not create those rights, which the haughty counts of Holstein inferred from it. The guardian could not lawfully accept a grant of his own ward under age, the validity of which he had to confirm himself. Nor could a prince, chosen by a party of dissatisfied nobles, dispose of an integral part of the kingdom, quite contrary to the capitulation of rights (*Haandfæstning*) which his guardian had signed in his name, and without consent of the general elective Diet of the kingdom—the *Dannehof*. Duke Valdemar was never crowned king of Denmark; he is not numbered among the monarchs of that country, and was shortly afterwards forced to give up all his pretensions and retire to Schleswig.

The Holstein historians pretend that this document—this *magna charta* of "Schleswig-Holstein," which they call the *Constitutio Valdemariana*, forms the very basis in the dispute between the kings of Denmark and their German subjects in the duchies, by the guaranty which it is supposed to give to the inseparability of the two provinces. But it is a highly remarkable fact that the existence of this document never has been proved; no copy of it has ever been found, and it may, therefore, with good ground, be considered as altogether apocryphal. No mention whatever is made of it in the original capitulation of Prince Valdemar, nor in the letter of feoffment, which Count Gerhard received in 1326, by which the Danish Council of State (*Rigsraad*) confirmed the investiture of South Jutland as a simple banner-fief (*Fanelehn*) of the Danish crown. Suppos-

ing even that such a document had existed, yet it remained without any influence on the relations of the kingdom; no reference was ever made to it by the Holstein Counts during their disputes with Denmark *at that time*, and the dukes of South Jutland continued to recognize the kings of Denmark as their lawful liege-lords. Yet we shall presently see an attempt of the Holsteiners to re-establish this imaginary constitution of Valdemar the Minor, in the concessions of Count Christian of Oldenborg, to his uncle, Count Adolph of Holstein, in 1448, on which they, at the present day, build all their pretensions to their right of a "Schleswig-Holstein union."

Christopher II., in the mean time, returned from his retreat in Mecklenburg, and the Danes flocked round him with hopes to escape from German oppression. He regained his crown, and young Valdemar Erikson, renouncing his ephemeral dignity, returned to his duchy of South Jutland, which Count Gerhard surrendered to him. But the weak and despicable Christopher II., encompassed by enemies on all sides, not only recognized the succession of the Counts of Schauenborg to the Danish banner-fief of South Jutland, in case of the death of Valdemar without male heirs, but, in his pecuniary distress, mortgaged the whole of North Jutland to Count Gerhard for a sum of money, and the islands to Count John of Itzehoe. These chieftains immediately occupied the Danish provinces thus surrendered to them, with their wild bands of German hirelings and adventurers. Poor, distracted Denmark had never found herself in greater distress. Her prelates and nobles fawned on the high-plumed foreigners; her industrious citizens and brave yeomanry were alike oppressed by their countrymen and enemies, and treated as if they were serfs. Her nationality seemed on the point of perishing beneath that of the Germans; her political power was on the eve of a total dissolution. King Christopher died broken-hearted on the Island of Falster in 1333; the province of Scania rose in arms, slaughtered the German *condottieri*, and united with Sweden. Yet the Holsteiners, with their active and ambitious chief, Count Gerhard, one of the greatest warriors of the age, still possessed all the mainland. Attempts at insurrection were made, but the Danes were

routed in every battle. Otho, the prince royal, defeated near Viborg, was carried a prisoner to the gloomy castle of Segeberg in Holstein. Valdemar, his younger brother, lived an exile at the court of Brandenburg. The cruelty and exactions of the foreign soldiery now became insupportable; even the good-natured Jutes at last were roused to resistance, when Count Gerhard, at the head of ten thousand Germans, began devastating that unhappy country with fire and sword. But the hour of retribution had arrived. The Danish knight, Niels Ebbesen of Nørrejæs, on the 18th of March, 1340, with sixty daring followers, entered the castle of Randers, and slew the count in the midst of his numerous mercenaries. Prince Valdemar Christopher now returned from Germany, and succeeded by his prudence, perseverance, and eminent political talents, in redeeming nearly all the alienated and mortgaged provinces of the kingdom. He was less successful in his exertions to recover South Jutland. The male line of Abel's descendants became extinct in 1375. The old wary King Valdemar III. had foreseen this important event, and a Danish army immediately entered the duchy and occupied its principal towns. But the Holstein Count, Iron-Henry, the chivalrous son of the great Gerhard, was still more prompt. He took possession of the castle of Gottorp and was attacking the Danes, when the news of the death of King Valdemar, at Vordingborg in Zealand, again suspended the war. His noble-minded daughter, Margaretha, the Semiramis of Denmark and Norway in the name of her son Oluf Hakonson, and being pressed by a disastrous war with the overbearing Hanseatic confederation, and desiring the aid of the Counts of Holstein, she, at an assembly of the Danish nobility, at Nyborg, in 1386, bestowed upon the Count Gerhard of Rendsborg, the son of Iron-Henry, the much disputed duchy of South Jutland, as a banner-fief of the Danish crown, to remain indivisible in the hands of only one of the counts, who, as a Danish vassal, had to perform the usual feudal military service to his liege-lord. The act did not expressly state whether the fief was personal or hereditary; and the Danish kings demanded the repetition of the oath of allegiance at every succession.

This sacrifice of the most beautiful province of the kingdom had been forced on the queen by the internal distraction and political weakness of Denmark; and although she afterwards succeeded in placing the crowns of the three Scandinavian nations on her head by the celebrated Calmarian union in 1396, yet the favorite scheme of her life was the reunion of the duchy of South Jutland with the kingdom of Denmark. Circumstances seemed in her favor. The warlike Duke Gerhard, the first who assumed the title of Duke of Schleswig, had perished in battle against the Ditmarskers, in 1404. His sons Henry, Adolph and Gerhard, were minors, and the youngest still unborn.

Queen Margaretha, by her consummate skill in employing persuasion and force alternately, might perhaps have seen her exertions crowned with success; but her death in 1412, and the violence and indiscretion of her unworthy nephew, Erik of Pomerania, who inherited her triple crown, kindled a most bloody and untoward twenty years' war with the young dukes, which fill the most disgraceful pages in the annals of Denmark. Though Erik disposed of the united armies and fleets of the whole north, that dastard and indolent king was foiled in every attempt to repossess himself of Schleswig. In 1420, a Danish army of nearly a hundred thousand men suffered a terrible defeat at Immervad; and Flensburg, the only city still occupied by the king, was on the point of surrendering to the gallant Duke Henry, and his Hanseatic allies, when both the contending parties were invited to appear before the throne of the German Emperor Sigismund, who offered himself as umpire in this odious dispute. King Erik at once accepted the invitation, and departed for Germany. The young Counts of Holstein, on the contrary, preferred the prosecution of the war, until at last Henry, yielding to the exhortations of the clergy, presented himself at the Imperial Court at Buda in Hungary, in 1424. Here he found a splendid assembly of German princes and Magyar magnates, as assessors, attending on the decision of the emperor. King Erik and his Danish nobles, sure of gaining their cause, had already left Hungary, and undertaken a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

It is very interesting to observe the same uncertainty about the relations between the duchies and Denmark, in the writings of the historians of the fifteenth century, as among the diplomatists and politicians of the present day. It appears, nevertheless, that the principal point in dispute on the part of the vassals at that time was their refusal to render feudal homage and military aid to their liege-lord. However this might have been, certain it is, that when the imperial umpire demanded the production of all the former documents and acts of feoffment, setting forth the claims of the Counts of Holstein to the duchy, Henry of Schauenborg could only refer to the vague expressions of the act of 1386 and point to his good sword for the rest of the evidence. The imperial sentence was pronounced on the 28th of June, 1424, according to which the emperor, as the chosen umpire of both parties, having consulted the prelates, knights, professors and lawyers of the Roman Empire, resolved: "that the whole of South Jutland with the city of Schleswig, the castle of Gottorp and other towns, the Danish wood (*Dänisch Wold*), the island of Als, and the coast district of the Friesians, with all rights and privileges, had ever belonged to the king and kingdom of Denmark; likewise that the Counts Henry, Adolph and Gerhard, neither had possessed nor did possess any hereditary right to the duchy." By that sentence, the constitution of Duke Valdemar of 1326, if ever it had existed, was then declared invalid, and Schleswig was pronounced an appurtenance of the Danish realm. Henry, indignant at the apparent injustice of the imperial decision, solemnly protested, and appealed to the Pope. But Martin V., feeling himself in a difficult position between the council of Constance and the Emperor, and intimidated by a missive from the latter, in which he advised him to confine his attention to ecclesiastical affairs, contented himself with exhorting the Counts of Holstein to pious submission, and to peace with Denmark.

Both parties then returned to the north, and the war in Schleswig was carried on with renewed strength. In 1427, Count Henry fell before Flensburg; but his warlike brother Adolph continued the contest with extraordinary energy and success. Ham-

burg, Lübeck and other powerful Hanseatic cities, supporting Holstein with their fleets, desolated the coasts of Denmark, and ruined her commerce. The greatest dissatisfaction with the incapacity of the king prevailed throughout the kingdoms of the Calmarian union. Erik was deposed, and the first act of his successor, Christopher the Bavarian, was the recognition of the hereditary rights of the house of Schauenborg to the duchy of Schleswig. At the Danish diet in Colding, in 1439, the Duke Adolph, kneeling down before his liege-lord, on his throne, surrounded by the court and nobility, took the oath of allegiance, and received from the hand of the king the banner of investiture.

The Calmarian union still existed, but it had become a mere phantom; the arrogance of the prelates and nobles, the subjection of the people, and the total want of political liberty and public opinion in that age of ignorance and oppression, did not permit the development of a confederacy among the Scandinavian nations, which otherwise would have promoted their civilization, happiness, and power. Denmark had not gained by her doubtful union with Sweden; she felt the more deeply her recent loss, and all her efforts tended towards the recovery of her alienated possessions on the main land. The Danish nobility, in compliance with this feeling, after the sudden death of King Christopher the Bavarian, in 1448, sent a deputation to Duke Adolph of Schleswig-Holstein, to offer him the crown of Denmark. The Duke was at the time only forty-five years of age; but being without children, and preferring the quiet retirement of his present position, to the cares and vicissitudes awaiting him on the throne of the warring kingdoms, he declined the proffered honor, but directed the attention of the Danes to his young sister's son, Count Christian of Oldenborg, whom he himself had educated and tenderly loved. Count Christian accepted the crown, and became the founder of the present dynasty of Denmark, in the year 1448.

Eleven years after this event, 1459, Adolph of Schleswig-Holstein died. His elder brother, Henry, had lived unmarried, and perished in his thirtieth year; the younger, Gerhard, died suddenly on the Rhine, in 1433, without legitimate issue. Thus the house of the Counts of Schau-

borg-Rendsborg became extinct, and the duchy of Schleswig of course escheated to the crown of Denmark, which the king ought immediately to have taken possession of. The county of Holstein, on the contrary, being a German fief, apparently devolved on the nearest *agnate* heirs of the lateral line of Schauenborg-Pinneberg, who already, in the year 1396, by a treaty, had secured its succession. The princes of the family of Oldenborg, however, were more nearly related to the defunct Count of Holstein than the house of Schauenborg-Pinneberg, but only as *cognates*. Some historians, in defence of such *direct rights* of King Christian to the succession of Holstein, mention that several instances were on record in the German states of that time, where the merely cognate heirs inherited. Thus a contemporary chronicler of Lubec, who continues the chronicle of Detmar from 1401 to 1472, and whose work, even by the historians of Holstein themselves, is pronounced to be of the highest authority, says, "that the nobles of Holstein rejected altogether this plea of a family compact between the two lines of the house of Schauenborg, as the council of the land had never sanctioned or confirmed it; and with regard to the inheritance of the Holstein fief, they recognized that King Christian and his brothers were *nearer* in respect to the succession, than the more distant Westphalian branch of the house of Schauenborg-Pinneberg, as they were sister's children of Count Adolph, and in their land, the female line (Spindle-side) might inherit as well as the male line (Sword-side)." A distinction seems thus to have existed in the succession between the great or banner-fiefs, (*feuda vexilli, Fanelehn,*) and the minor fiefs of the German Empire; inasmuch as in the former the inheritance was limited to *male heirs*, while in the latter the *female line* partook of the same right. Holstein, being originally a dependent fief of the duchy of Saxony, and not a *feudum vexilli* of the Empire, the *direct right* of King Christian to the succession of this duchy might have been justly insisted upon at the time; which goes directly against the late assertion of Prussia with regard to both duchies, "that only the agnates were admitted to the inheritance."

The great question, however, as to whether Schleswig, an ancient and important

province of Denmark, should be at last incorporated with the kingdom and separated from Holstein, or again become united with the latter, by a new investiture of the king, was now to be determined. But a new difficulty had unexpectedly been created by the fact that the Duke Adolph, moved perhaps by his old rancor towards Denmark, against whom he had spent his youth in hard fighting, and still more by his natural desire to preserve the close union of his two beautiful states, had persuaded his young nephew, Christian of Oldenborg, when the crown of Denmark was offered to him in 1448, to renounce his right to Schleswig, and to promise that, according to the *constitutio Valdemariana*, the duchy of Schleswig and the kingdom of Denmark never should be united again under the same sceptre, and that the duchy of Schleswig-Holstein should remain forever and ever undivided—*ewich tosammend ungedelt.*

This curious Low German document of Count Christian of Oldenborg is dated 28th of June, 1448, more than a year before his coronation at Copenhagen as King of Denmark on the 28th October, 1449. It had no validity, because Count Christian could not give away any territory or rights of the kingdom of Denmark, the crown of which he did not wear; nay, he could not even do so after he had been crowned king, except with the consent of the states in a general *dannehof* or diet. This renunciation and promise of the young Count may therefore be considered null and void.

We said that Christian, as a cognate heir, had ~~no~~ right to the succession in Holstein in 1459. His ambition however incited him to go any length in order to acquire both the estates, Holstein as well as Schleswig, and to unite both with the kingdom in spite of his own renunciation of 1448. Instead, therefore, of drawing in the escheated fief of Schleswig, and incorporating it with Denmark, he did not enforce that right, but simply offered himself as a candidate for the free election of the Schleswig and Holstein nobility. Thus he placed himself on a level with the indigent counts of Schauenborg-Pinneberg, well knowing that the large sums he had by underhand means distributed among the avaricious prelates and nobles, and the powerful influence of the family of Rantzau, would procure him the majority of

the votes. In this manner King Christian gained his object, but not without great sacrifices, which through his whole reign pressed hard on the kingdom of Denmark. He settled his patrimonial counties of Oldenborg and Delmenhorst on his younger brother, with forty thousand florins. The Counts of Schauenborg received an indemnification of four hundred and thirty thousand florins, the county of Pinneberg, and several other possessions. The prelates and nobles secured their most extensive privileges, throwing all the burdens of the commonwealth on the more numerous and industrious classes of the citizens and peasants. On his actual election to the duchies he declared by a charter of rights (*Haandfæstning*) dated the 5th of March, 1460, which the Holstein historians consider as a renewal of the Valdemarian Constitution, that the estates of Schleswig and Holstein were to remain inseparable; that they had had of their own free will, without any regard to his being King of Denmark, chosen him for their Duke and Count, that they likewise after his death were entitled to elect his successor from among his children, or in case of his having no issue, from among his lawful heirs, and that if he should leave but one son to succeed him on the throne of Denmark, the estates should have the right to choose some other chief, provided only he were of the kin and lineage of the deceased.

The future position of Schleswig for several centuries was now decided. A few years later, in 1474, Holstein was erected into a duchy, and though Schleswig remained a Danish fief, which did not belong to the empire, it now entered by its relation to Holstein into a more intimate intercourse with Germany. The mass of the people still spoke Danish, as they do to this day, but the all-powerful nobility, by intermarriages in the sister duchy, and the clergy, by the great spiritual movement in the south, became more and more Germanized. Within half a century, the diet in Schleswig began to be held in the Low-German dialect. In the times of the Reformation, the Lutheran translation of the Bible in the High-German language was still nearly unintelligible to the great majority of the common people, both in Holstein and Schleswig, yet by the mighty influence of the German civilization from the south, and the indifference of the Oldenborg kings, who

themselves spoke the German at the court of Copenhagen, the Danish lost ground, and the High-German at last gaining the victory, became the language of the pulpit, of the bar, and of the national assemblies. The university of Kiel was erected in 1665, and the young Schleswigers as well as the Holsteiners, having received their education at that institution, extended their travels to Germany, in order to finish their studies and bring German literature and science back to their native countries. Nor were the commercial relations with the Hanseatic confederation less influential in alienating the Schleswigers from their Danish brethren. The naval establishments (*Styrisharne*) of the victorious Valdemars, who with their Danish fleets subjected all the southern coasts of the Baltic, and extended their feudal dominion over Esthonia, Pomerania and Rügen, had gone to ruin during the civil wars of the fourteenth century. The eighty-five cities of the rich and powerful Hansa had for nearly two centuries possessed the entire commerce of the Baltic and northern seas, and by their exclusive rights and privileges, kept the Scandinavian kings in the most abject bondage to a commercial aristocracy. No wonder, then, that Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen had become the schools and places of general resort of the active mariners of Schleswig and Holstein.

King Christian I. of Oldenborg, having thus, in 1460, been elected Duke of Schleswig and Holstein, it might have been supposed that the great question about the duchies had at last been solved; but most unhappily for the tranquillity and welfare of the Danish monarchy, new divisions followed thirty years later (1490) which at different periods, for nearly two centuries and a half, were the causes of dynastic dissensions, foreign invasions, and incalculable distress and misery in the whole monarchy. Although the crown of Denmark continued elective for two hundred years (1460—1660) after the accession of Christian I., it descended nevertheless as regularly from father to son, as if it had been hereditary. But in the duchies, where the nobility (*Ritterschaft*) alone formed the states, this oligarchy simultaneously elected different descendants of the house of Oldenborg, and the lands thus became divisible and subdivisible among distinct lines of the

dynasty, quite contrary to the spirit of the principle of unity expressed in the act of 1460, which in this manner was abolished *de facto* by the Schleswig and Holstein states themselves.

Christian I. died in 1441, and left two sons by his Queen Dorothea—Hans, who was elected King of Denmark, and Frederik, at that time only ten years of age. The ambitious queen dowager, desiring her younger son, Prince Frederik, to be elected in the duchies, succeeded by her intrigues in delaying the final decision of the states for nine years, when at last, in 1490, both the royal brothers were elected, and a very remarkable division of the two provinces took place. Instead of declaring King Hans of Denmark Duke of Schleswig, and his brother Frederik Duke of Holstein and vassal of the Germanic Empire, the states now divided *both* duchies between *both* the princes. King Hans obtained the northern district of Hadersleben, the city of Flensburg, the island of Als, as belonging to Schleswig, and the western and southern parts of Holstein, with Rendsborg, Glückstad, Itzehoe, Segeberg, Oldesloe and the promontory of Heiligenhafen,—which all formed the possessions of the Royal or Segeberg line of succession. His younger brother Frederik united the Schleswig districts of Gottorp, Tondern and Apenrade, with Kiel, the eastern parts of Holstein and the island of Femern, and thus established the Ducal or Gottorp line. In this manner the Segeberg line possessed *six* different districts of both duchies inclosed or intermingled with the four portions belonging to that of Gottorp! This most untoward subdivision of the two Danish and German fiefs, afterwards gave rise to the fatal denomination of "*a duchy of Schleswig-Holstein*," which, although a *political nullity*, has nevertheless been the cause of interminable complications and dissensions, and mainly contributed to the present unjust and iniquitous invasion of Denmark by the Germanic confederation. Disputes soon arose between the brothers; the ambitious Frederik laid claims to the investiture of fiefs in Denmark and Norway, which were refused by the diet, who declared that Denmark was a free and indivisible elective kingdom. Such a refusal exasperated the duke in the highest degree. He united with the Hanseatic cities

against his brother, and taking advantage of the unruly spirit of the Swedes, he even attempted by flattery and promises to be elected their king. A civil war would no doubt have broken out with King Hans, if a feud against the Ditmarskers in Holstein had not caused the brothers to unite their forces against the common enemy.

The Ditmarskers, a people of Saxon descent inhabiting a small fertile district between the Elbe and the Eyder, in that part of Holstein which faces the Western ocean, had during several centuries lived in perfect independence. They formed a commonwealth, which was governed by bailiffs and aldermen, and united by the love of freedom, they had maintained themselves in this situation against all aggression. At the conquest of Holstein by King Valdemar the Victorious, they followed the Danish banner; but during the bloody battle of Bornhöved in 1227, they, by treacherously attacking the Danes in their rear, caused their total overthrow. This treachery was rewarded by the counts of Holstein with perfect independence, and although Count Gerhard afterwards attempted to subdue them, they defeated and slew him, foiled all subsequent invasions, and obtained from the German Emperor the privilege of being placed beneath the protection of the archiepiscopal see of Bremen. Nor would those poor and brave herdsmen and fishermen have been disturbed in their tranquillity, if they had not, like the Swiss on the Alps, relying on their victories, become troublesome aggressors on their neighbors. King Christian I. had already resolved their reduction, and having represented them to the Emperor Friederich III. as a set of lawless and unruly rovers, he received permission to make the conquest of their territory. But he died, and his sons would perhaps have left the Ditmarskers to themselves, if they had not taken an active part in the dispute between Duke Frederik and the Hanseatic cities of Lübeck and Hamburg, and destroyed the ducal dépôts and custom-houses on the island of Helgoland. The king and the duke now resolved the war. The brilliant feudal array of Denmark and the duchies assembled in Holstein during the winter of 1500, and was strengthened by six thousand mercenary Saxon lance-knechts, commanded by the haughty *condottiere* Junker Slents, who

promised the king that he would take Ditzmarsk even if it was chained to heaven itself. Thus the best appointed army Denmark had ever sent forth, consisting of thirty thousand combatants, advanced through the low marshes against the six thousand armed herdsmen, who in vain had demanded the aid of the cities on the Elbe. On the 13th of February, the Danes occupied the open town of Meldorf, which had been abandoned, and only the aged and the defenceless fell victims to the wild soldiery of the time. But their cruelty and presumption met with the justest chastisement. Animated by despair, and resolved to perish in the cause of their liberty, this handful of people, led on by the heroic Wolf Isebrand, occupied a small fort situated on an eminence between Meldorf and Hemmingsted. The royal army had to pass on a narrow and swampy road, hemmed in on both sides by ditches and marshes. While the Saxon infantry advanced, they were received by a destructive fire from the batteries on the hill. They lost their commander, and falling back in disorder upon the Danish chivalry, they were furiously attacked on all sides by the light-armed Ditmarskers, who, on their long spears, with dexterity jumped over the ditches and began an indiscriminate slaughter on the defenceless flanks of the crowded column. Three hundred and sixty nobles of the most distinguished families in Denmark and the duchies, and more than fifteen thousand troops, perished on the battle-field. The king himself escaped with difficulty. The old Dannebrog, the Danish banner from the times of the Valdemars, was lost together with all the cannon, arms, and an immense baggage. The Ditmarskers, pursuing the retreating army, made devastating incursions into Holstein, which forced the king, by the mediation of the Hanseatic cities, to recognize their independence.

King Hans died in 1513, and was succeeded by his spirited, but violent and cruel son, Christian II., who immediately on his accession called together the states of Schleswig and Holstein to a general diet in Flensburg, in order to be elected duke of the royal share in the duchies. The states assembled; but before they swore allegiance to the king, they demanded the confirmation of all their privileges and rights, and certain restitutions to Duke

Frederik, which King Hans, in 1503, had engaged to make to his brother. The young king, nourishing a deep-rooted hatred against the powerful nobility, whom he, as a crown prince, had already with the axe and the sword almost annihilated in Norway, and whose exorbitant privileges he intended to circumscribe in Denmark, refused the demands of the states. Serious discussions now arose; and both prelates and nobles declared that if the king did not confirm all their rights and claims, they would immediately elect his uncle Frederik as their only sovereign duke. Christian II., knowing the ambition of that prince, and fearing the general dissatisfaction in Sweden, yielded at the time; he deferred his intended reforms, acknowledged the rights of the oligarchy, and received their homage as Duke of Schleswig and Holstein. Yet the enmity between the two princes continued, and was fomented by the disloyal and treacherous conduct of Christian towards his uncle. The horrible slaughter of the Swedish nobility in Stockholm on the 8th of November, 1520, and the subsequent rebellion of the Danish nobles in 1523, decided the fate of Christian the Tyrant. He fled to Germany, and Frederik, being called to the Danish throne, immediately took possession of all the royal castles in the duchies, which thus were united a second time. They remained undivided till the year 1544; during which period King Christian III., the son of Frederik I., had governed them in the name of his younger brothers, Hans, Adolph, and Frederik. Another favorable opportunity had thus presented itself to the Danish Council for reclaiming the ancient Danish province of South Jutland, and by uniting it with Denmark, to establish anew the old Scandinavian frontier of the Eyder—or at least, by adopting the advice of the distinguished general, John de Rantzau, at once to declare the right of *primogeniture* in the duchies. This principle had at that time already been introduced with success into Bavaria and Mark-Brandenburg. But the Danish oligarchs, says a native historian, were more intent upon fortifying their castles and extending their farms, on buying and selling their poor serfs, who were no better than slaves, than on securing the welfare of their king and country. The Council consented to another still more

disastrous division. The king, and his brothers Hans and Adolph, received different districts both of Schleswig and Holstein, with their castles, convents and towns, which were denominated after the principal residences. The king's share was called that of Sonderborg. Duke Hans obtained Hadersleben, and Adolph, Gottorp. The younger brother Frederik became bishop of Hildersheim in 1551. The ducal claims to the possession of Hamburg and the territory of the Ditmarskers, and many privileges and taxes, remained in common; for every one of the dukes possessed the full sovereignty in his own principality, though he recognized the emperor as his liege-lord for Holstein. Yet the royal brothers, on their presenting their homage to the king, refused to perform the usual military service for Schleswig as a Danish banner-fief; acting upon the illegal pretension of the old dukes of South Jutland, that the duchy was a frank-fee exempted from every feodary duty. Years passed on in violent disputes, and at last, when the ceremony of investiture was to take place at the general assembly at Colding, in 1547, in the presence of the king, the dukes on a sudden refused; a tumult arose, the ceremony was suspended, and the princes, mounting their horses, hurried off in disgust. But King Christian did not yield, and though he lived nearly in the same dissensions with his brothers as the unhappy Erik Plough-penning had done, three hundred years before, he still vindicated the right of the Danish crown.

Adolph of Holstein-Gottorp, a prince of a hot and impetuous temper, again turned his arms against the courageous Ditmarskers, who, ever since the terrible defeat of King Hans, had enjoyed uninterrupted possession of their independence. Christian III., however, who wished to rule in tranquillity over his dominions, succeeded in preserving peace till his death in 1559. But his son and successor, Frederik II., was more willing to enter into the designs of his uncle, being afraid of his conquering the whole territory and keeping it to himself. The king, with his Danish army, therefore joined the duke's, and better care was now taken to insure success. The conflict was long and bloody; but the intrepidity of the Ditmarskers could not prevail against the military knowledge and

discipline of their enemies. The Danes were commanded by the old Count John Rantzau, the head of one of the noblest families of Holstein, to whose military talents the house of Oldenborg was highly indebted for its victories and grandeur. Adolph too was a prince of uncommon bravery and skill, who fought in the hottest of the battle, and thrice rallied his troops, whom the desperate valor of the enemy had forced to give ground. After a violent struggle the victory declared for the Danes; it was as complete and decisive as they could wish. All the towns and forts surrendered; the vanquished sued for peace, which was granted them. They paid homage to the King of Denmark as their lawful sovereign, and took the oath of perpetual fidelity to him and his successors. They paid the expenses of the war, and delivered up the standards and military trophies taken from King Hans.

Though the victors in apparent concord divided the conquered territory, yet the dispute about the investiture of Schleswig still continued. As no party would yield, the decision of that odious question was referred to the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the Duke of Mecklenburg, as umpires. In May, 1579, the sentence was given at the Congress of Odensee. Schleswig was to be considered as a hereditary military fief of Denmark, with which the king was bound to invest the dukes of the Oldenborg family. The king was to consult the dukes about questions of war and peace, and they then pledged themselves to render him military service as their liege-lord, with *forty* knights and *eighty* foot-soldiers! This ridiculous act was then signed by the plenipotentiaries of the foreign princes, the vassals, and the sagacious Council of Denmark. The states in the duchies showed far more resolution and perseverance in the maintenance of their rights. They refused in 1563 to recognize the sovereignty of the Duke Hans, the younger brother of King Frederik II., on whom he settled the principality of Sonderborg, on the island of Als, nor did the descendants of this line ever succeed in obtaining the recognition of that dignity to this day.*

The decision of Odensee, though not satisfactory to Denmark, did at least settle two important points: the obligation on the part of the dukes to renew the investiture, and the recognition of the military service, which though in itself insignificant, still formed the strong link between the duchy of Schleswig and the kingdom. The ceremony took place on the 3d of May, 1580, on the large square of Odensee, where the royal throne had been erected. The three dukes at the same time laid their hands on the banner of Dannebrog, and swore the usual allegiance to their liege-lord as faithful vassals. A few months later, the Hadersleben line became extinct by the death of Duke Hans the elder. All the possessions were now equally divided between Duke Adolph of Holstein-Gottorp and the King, while the subdivisions which entailed so many evils on the duchies were put a stop to, in 1608, when the right of primogeniture was established in the ducal part, and, in 1650, extended to the royal province.

Christian IV. reigned with a strong hand, and taught the dukes to respect the feudal rights of Denmark; but tremendous events were forthcoming, which once more overturned the old relations, and at last subjected them to the decision of the sword. In 1618 the terrible thirty years' war broke out between the Protestant and Catholic parties in Germany, and King Christian IV., as chief of the Low-Saxon circle, entered Germany with his Danish army. By the treachery of his Saxon allies he was defeated in the bloody battle of Lutter am Baremburg, in 1626, and the imperial General Wallenstein, pursuing the retreating king, overran the duchies and all the mainland of Denmark with his wild bands. The Duke of Holstein-Gottorp then broke his allegiance and declared against the king, and though he lost all his possessions in the course of the war, they were restored to him by the treaty of Lübeck, in 1629, between the Emperor and the King of Denmark. The hatred between the reigning lines had become inveterate. The Duke again united with Sweden, and Carl Gustav, crossing the belt on the ice, during the winter, 1658, forced Frederik III., the son and successor of Christian IV., in the treaties of Roeskilde and Copenhagen, the same year, to concede to the Duke and

* The present Duke of Sonderborg-Augustenburg, and his brother Prince Noer, who have taken arms against their cousin, King Frederik VII. of Denmark, are the direct offspring of that family.

his descendants the sovereignty and *supreme dominion* of the Gottorp division of Schleswig. The feudal dependence on Denmark was thus abolished in the Holstein-Gottorp dynasty, but continued with its military service and other duties in the lateral lines of Sonderborg, and the introduction of a hereditary succession in Denmark, in 1660, strengthened the ties between the larger or royal part of the duchy and the kingdom.

The revolution of 1660 forms a new period in the history of Denmark. It overturned the old elective constitution, with its powerful oligarchical council of state, (*Rigsraad*) and the extravagant privileges of the nobility. The king, according to the new *lex regia*, (*Kongelov*.) became the most absolute monarch in Europe, and the succession of the crown was settled both on the male and female descendants of the Oldenborg dynasty. The duchies did not subscribe the new act of sovereignty, or renew their oath of allegiance, nor did they directly take any part in those transactions; the *lex regia*, however, distinctly expresses the leading principles, which remain as the guiding rule for the question about the relations of Schleswig to the kingdom. In its 19th article it enjoins the king to secure, entire and undivided, under the Danish crown, not only the realms of Denmark and Norway, with all the provinces and islands belonging to them, but moreover all possessions which may be acquired by the sword, or other legal titles, and thus expresses the indivisibility of the kingdoms and all other possessions which belonged to Denmark in 1665. The grand-son of King Frederik III. at last found an opportunity to realize this principle by uniting and incorporating the whole duchy of Schleswig in 1720. The hostile relations between the house of Holstein-Gottorp and the crown of Denmark continued during the remainder of the seventeenth century, and on the breaking out of the great northern war between Sweden, Russia, Brandenburg and Denmark, Duke Charles Frederik of Holstein-Gottorp, who had taken side with Charles XII. of Sweden, lost all his possessions in Schleswig. They were conquered by King Frederik IV. and his Danish army in 1713, and at the general peace that followed the death of Charles XII. in Norway, 1718, Denmark, giving up all her other con-

quests, secured the duchy of Schleswig as a permanent and inalienable possession by the strongest guaranty of Sweden, England and France.*

By letter patent of the 22d of August, 1721, the inhabitants of the conquered territory were called upon to do homage to Frederik IV. as their lawful sovereign, and the two districts of Apenrade and Gottorp were incorporated with that part of the duchy, which previously had belonged to the Danish crown. The estates of Schleswig took the oath of allegiance to the king and his hereditary successors, according to the *lex regia*, at the castle of Gottorp, on the 4th of September, 1721. The junior branches of the house of Oldenborg, the Dukes of Augustenborg and Glücksborg, who did not possess any sovereign rights, gave their oath in writing. In the letter patent and the formulary for the oath of allegiance, the king expressly mentions Schleswig as an integral part of the crown of Denmark, from which it had been torn away in disastrous times, and declares it henceforth eternally to be incorporated as a part of the kingdom. This declaration is definite, but it was not completely executed. King Frederik IV. did not realize his first intention of incorporating Schleswig as a province. It remained a separate hereditary duchy, enjoying its ancient privileges, but by its participating in the regulations of the *lex regia* of 1665, it now followed the cognate succession of Denmark. In accordance with the new relations into which Schleswig thus entered in 1721 with the kingdom, the arms of the duchy were quartered with those of Denmark Proper; "and so," says the excellent historian, Professor Christian Molbech, "after a partial separation this fertile and important province again became an organic and indivisible part of the state."

And yet was the possession of Schleswig far from being undisturbed. Den-

* "His Britannic Majesty agrees to guaranty and to maintain and to continue in peaceful possession that part of the duchy of Schleswig which his Danish Majesty has in his hands, and to defend the same in the best manner possible, against all and every one who may endeavor to disturb him therein, either directly or indirectly." Treaty between Denmark and Great Britain of the 26th of July, 1720. The treaty with Sweden is dated June the 14th, and that with France August 18th, the same year.

mark had to carry on the contest for more than fifty years. The threatening storm came no longer from Sweden—which, vanquished and weakened during the disastrous wars of Charles XII., had now for a time retreated from the great political theatre—but from the more dangerous Russian Empire. The duke Charles Frederik had taken his residence in Kiel, in Holstein, where he strenuously protested against the cession of Schleswig. He soon after married Anne Petrowna, the daughter of Peter the Great, and became thus, supported by Russia, a formidable enemy to Denmark. Yet the prudent Christian VI., the son and successor of Frederik IV., found the means to frustrate the war-like schemes of the duke, without any rupture with that power. More imminent seemed the war in 1762, when, on the death of the Empress Elizabeth, Peter III., the son of Charles Frederick, succeeded her on the throne of Russia. The first act of his reign was a declaration of war against Frederik V. of Denmark. As the head of the house of Holstein-Gottorp, he renewed his claims to the ceded part of Schleswig. Immense armaments were undertaken in Denmark; a fine fleet of sixty men-of-war was sent cruising in the Baltic, and an army of seventy thousand combatants was advancing upon the Russians in the environs of Wismar, when the news of the revolution at St. Petersburg, the violent abdication and murder of Peter, put a sudden stop to the military demonstrations. Catherine II., his successor, did not prosecute the quarrel of her hot-headed husband.* She recalled the Russian troops from Mecklenburg and concluded a treaty with Denmark, which was confirmed by her son, the Emperor Paul, in 1773, in accordance with which, the house of Holstein-Gottorp forever renounced all claims upon Schleswig, and by a second treaty of the same date, exchanged its possessions and rights in the duchy of Holstein for the counties of Oldenborg and Delmenhorst,

ceded to it in return by the King of Denmark. The completeness of the cession of Schleswig on the part of Russia is still more evident, when compared with her exchange of the counties of Delmenhorst and Oldenborg for the Gottorp share of Holstein. According to the former treaty, Schleswig is ceded to the King of Denmark and his royal successors, while the latter mentions only King Christian VII. and his brother, Prince Frederik, with *their male* heirs; thus declaring that Russia reserved her rights to Holstein on the extinction of the male descendants of the reigning dynasty.*

By these treaties and later settlements with the lateral lines of Augustenborg and Beck, the house of Oldenborg came at last into undisputed possession both of Schleswig and Holstein. The latter duchy, though a German fief, was incorporated with the kingdom of Denmark in 1806, on the dissolution of the German empire, in consequence of the victories and conquests of the Emperor Napoleon. But at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Holstein again entered into connection with the Germanic confederation. King Frederik VI., as duke of Holstein, obtained a vote in the diet of Frankfort, and bound himself to join the federal army with a contingent of three thousand five hundred troops.

At the general peace in 1815, all the different nations, which formed the coalition against France, had been the gainers. Denmark alone, as the faithful ally of the Emperor Napoleon, had been almost crushed under the weight of accumulated disasters, and from a flourishing kingdom of the second rank, with a numerous army, a gallant navy and extensive commerce, she had then, in her isolated position, dwindled down to a small state, of a third or fourth rank among the victorious nations around her. Her capital had been burnt; her fleet carried off; her colonies, credit and commerce nearly destroyed—and to crown all, Norway had been surrendered to the Swedes, who at that time were still her enemies. Norway, which for nearly four centuries and a half had been united to her,

* Mr. D'Israeli, M. P., said in his speech on the 19th of April last, in the House of Commons: "When Russia was about to invade Denmark, and the latter having applied to this country, England signified her intention to carry out the provisions of her guaranty, and in consequence of that notification, Russia did not invade Schleswig."

* This important fact demonstrates that the Russian emperor, as a direct descendant of the Dukes of Holstein-Gottorp, has a nearer claim to the duchy of Holstein, than the Duke and Prince of Augustenborg.

and whose people bore in origin, language, history and manners, the closest affinity to the Danes, was now violently severed from her sister kingdom. Denmark received, by way of compensation, but a very imperfect one, and on her part very reluctantly, another small slice of German territory, cut away with the large carving knife of the Congress of Vienna, from the newly liberated people of Germany, in the duchy of Lauenborg. The circumstances which brought that German duchy under the Danish crown are very remarkable. When King Frederik VI. was obliged by the treaty of Kiel, in 1814, to cede the kingdom of Norway to the crown of Sweden, the king of that country, on his part, offered as an indemnity to the King of Denmark and his successors, the duchy of Swedish Pomerania and the principality of Rügen, with seventy-five and a half German square miles, and 160,000 inhabitants.

Prussia now stood forward and demanded the cession of these maritime provinces, proposing to give Denmark an equivalent territory, which it did not possess. But in order to fulfil its promise, Prussia then persuaded the King of Hanover—George III. of Great Britain—to cede the duchy of Saxe-Lauenborg, with nineteen German square miles, and 45,000 inhabitants. The poor Lauenborgers remained six days Prussian subjects, and were then, on the 4th of June, 1815—"in perpetuity, with full sovereignty and proprietary right"—transferred to the King of Denmark. The

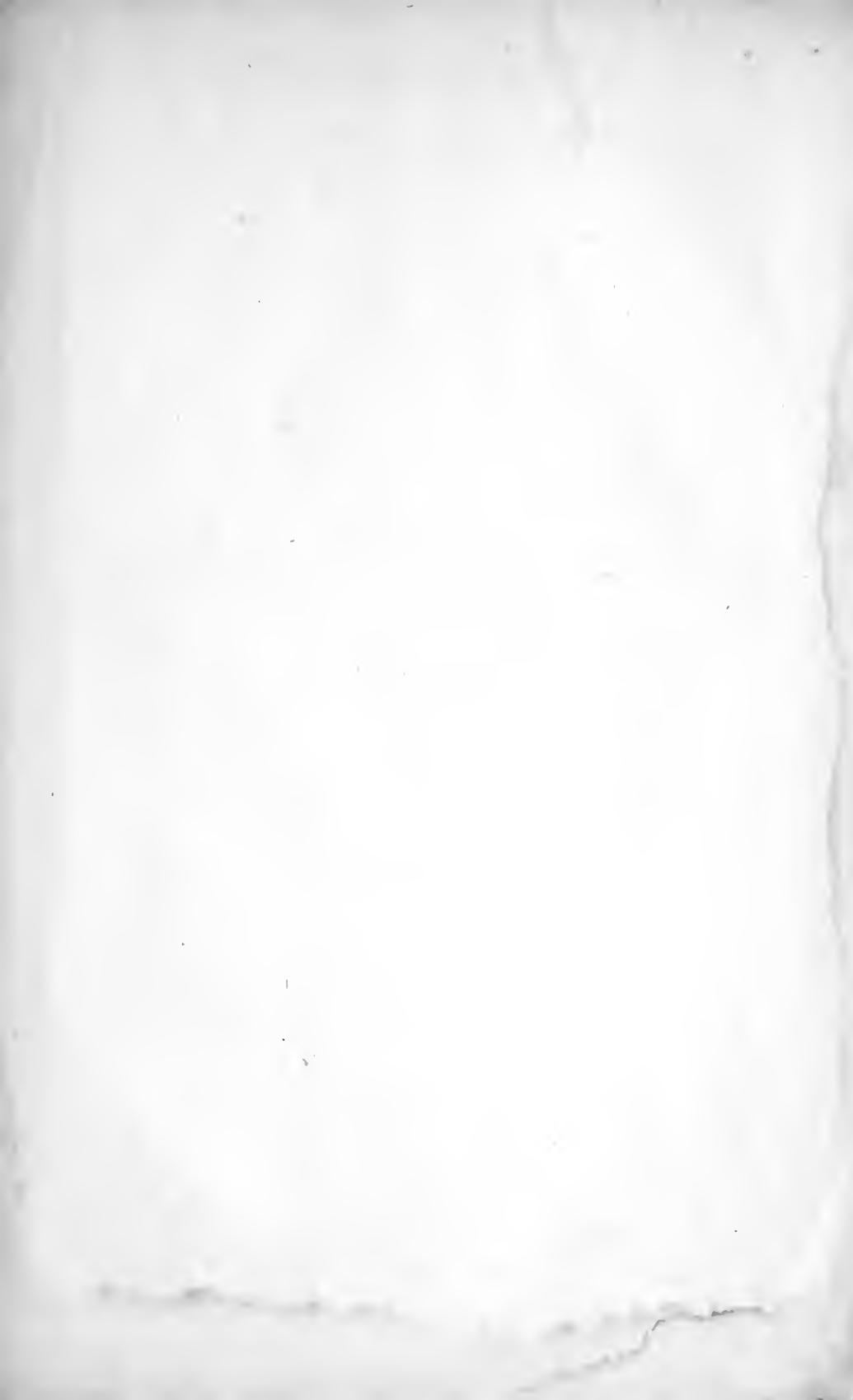
Frankfort deputy Welcker has lately had the greatest difficulty in persuading the quiet and industrious Lauenborgers that these treaties are null and void, and that they, as Germans, belonging to the common glorious fatherland, ought to take up arms against their Danish liege lord.

Such were the relations between Denmark and the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenborg in 1815. There did not at that time exist any party spirit, any Schleswig-Holstein separatistic tendencies, which might have prognosticated any hostile conflict between the two different nationalities of the monarchy.

That movement began later, and originated not with the people, but with the nobility—*die Ritterschaft*—and the swarm of German employees, forming a bureaucracy, who by the ambitious intrigues of the princes of Augustenborg, were led to hope that by a final rupture with Denmark, they might deprive her both of Schleswig and Lauenborg, and thus form an independent state of their own, which, by its important maritime position on the Baltic and the North Sea, might, as they said, become the handle of the sword, which Germany was to throw into the scales of fate on the Northern Seas.

A second article on this interesting subject, so little understood in general, will give an account of the recent revolutionary movements in the duchies, and the events of the war consequent thereon.









LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 028 303 733 2